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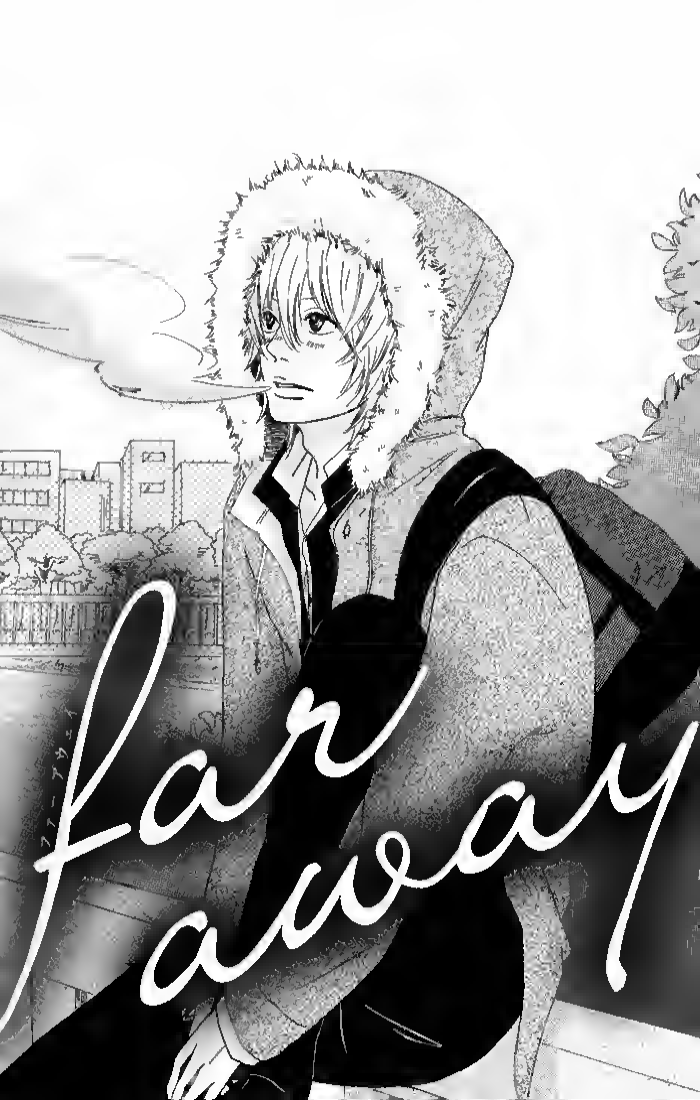

far away

Here's my take on how to become popular
First Point
My Dad
If you hang out with the same people all the time, they'll start thinking you've got too much free time on your hands
Whaaaaat? How lame.
You've got to become that unattainable goal
Second Point
NO WAY!
DON'T TELL ME YOU'VE GONE AND GOTTEN A GIRL-FRIEND?!
NOW WHY WOULD I GO AND DO THAT?
Don't ever have a steady girlfriend
SAKIKO, GOOD MORNING!
SKRITCH
Ah
Takeuchi Sakiko
GOOD MORNING!
AWESOME! YOU'RE SO SMART!
I HEARD THAT YOU SCORED TOP OF THE CLASS AGAIN ON THE LAST TEST.
TAKE-UCHI-SAN,

SFX BA-THUMP
IN BETWEEN TWO HOT CHICKS
Kyaa! It's Shou-kun!
TAKE-UCHI-SAN.
I FELL ASLEEP IN LITERATURE CLASS YESTER-DAY AND DIDN'T TAKE ANY NOTES. CAN I BORROW YOURS?
WELL, ACTUALLY I DOZED OFF A LITTLE SO I MISSED SOME PARTS...
Haaaa!
ドキューン
She fell asleep?! Some cute.
And she's handing them over to me herself!
...
HEY, SHOU!!
YOU'RE DIFFERENT AROUND US THAN YOU ARE AROUND TAKEUCHI-SAN, YOU KNOW?
Grin
WHAT ARE YOU TRYING TO SUGGEST? IT'S CUTE THAT YOU'RE JEA-
I'm not jealous.
Third Point

far away

SFX SULKING
To think that all the women around me are this easy...
ムム!
Sakiko, good morning.
Oh, good morning.
ordinary woman will naturally fall for you
by telling her words she likes to hear and having light physical contact
Sigh
Eventually, I'll have to decide on one...

Or so the game goes...
Sheeeeeeeh
If she notices me, I lose!!
SFX QUICKLY
ポロ
I've been found out already!
サッ
ぴくっ
SFX FALLS
SFX SHOCK
Huh?
That girl has the sakura blossom on her head...
It all started one year ago.
SCHOOL ENTRANCE CEREMONY
Such a long speech.
SFX YAWN

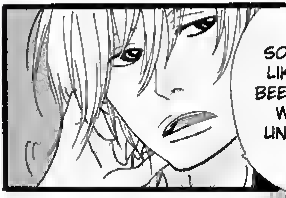
But how do I...
WHAT IF IT'S A POPULAR GUY? OR SOMEONE OUTSIDE YOUR STANDARDS?
Emm...
AH, WELL A POPULAR GUY WOULD BE OKAY TOO.
It'd be pretty cool.
SFX SURPRISED
I read porn books to study up on women.
WAH!
WAH!
GYAAAAH
How shameless
I worked out non-stop
What is with you?
Please tell me how to be popular!
I went and talked with all the coolest guys in town.
SFX DASH
UWAAAAAAAH
That's it!
Kiss
Shout
From now on, I'll be popular!!
OH, BUT ACTUALLY,
I ALREADY HAVE SOMEONE I LIKE. I MET HIM AT THE ENTRANCE CEREMONY.
HEH
I've mastered the art of being popular.
SAWA
All that's left is to figure out a plan of attack.
TERA-SAWA.
WHAT'S THAT? YOU'RE BUGGING ME.
I was asleep just now!!
WHAT?! PERSISTENT OLD MAN!!
Who the hell...

SFX TA-DA
SFX GAAAAAH
TERASAWA, REPORT TO THE STAFF ROOM LATER.
No way.
That was so not cool of me.
OH NO
SFX AHEM
WAS I BEING TOO PERSISTENT?
I'M SORRY ABOUT THAT.
After seeing something so horrible, I'm bound to lose points with her!!
She's looking this way!!
STAFF ROOM
TERASAWA, YOU HAVEN'T BEEN ATTENDING CLASSES AS YOU SHOULD.
AND IF YOU FAIL THE NEXT EXAM,
YOU'RE GOING TO HAVE TO REPEAT THE YEAR
!!
SFX AAAAAAH
What?
YOU'LL BE TUTORED BY TAKEUCHI AFTER SCHOOL.
I'll ask her to help you

far away
Could this whole mess be my chance?
What do I do if I disgrace myself even more?!
NO NO NO!! NO WAY!! AND WHY DOES IT HAVE TO BE TAKEUCHI?! CAN'T YOU FIND SOMEONE ELSE?!
NO WAY!!
BECAUSE SHE'S TOP OF THE CLASS.
You've got to be shitting me.
OKAY THEN, I'LL TEACH YOU.
SMIRK
UMM...
IS IT OKAY IF WE START?
GR...
Jeez!
Hey...
Grin
Wait a minute.
...
HAH?
Glare
Umm
Well now. How should I go about making her like me?

Study here!
Take good care of Shou!
Hurry up and leave.

Disheartened
YOU KNOW,
IF I DON'T STUDY, I'M GONNA HAVE TO REPEAT THE YEAR.
CLENCH
SHOU.
SFX EEEEEK


SO IT LOOKS LIKE YOU'VE BEEN SADDLED WITH THIS UNPLEASANT TASK.

YUP.
I LOVE IT.
She is so amazingly compassionate.
WELL, I DIDN'T HAVE ANY PARTICULAR REASON TO TURN IT DOWN.
Cough
RIIIIING
SFX BA-DUMP

She's being pretty persistent.
AH...
SFX RIIIIING
NO...IT'S NOT REALLY..
I JUST THOUGHT IT MIGHT BE SOMETHING URGENT
SFX RIIIIING
Um
YOU NEED TO ANSWER THAT?
SFX RIIIIING
SORRY IT'S SO LOUD.
MAP
I'LL JUST SEND HER A MESSAGE LATER.
BUT YOU'RE HELPING ME STUDY RIGHT NOW, SO
SFX RIII
SFX RIIIIING
TURN OFF
YOU'RE A NICE GUY, YOU KNOW
HUH?
What did you say?
SFX RIIIIING

I'M SORRY I WASN'T LISTENING.
EH?
AH,
NO, IT'S FINE...
BLUSH
SFX: WAVE
IT'S LIKE I'VE GOT
SUCH A COOL PERSON ALL TO MYSELF...
Embarrassed
Huh?
THAT PROBA-BLY FREAKS YOU OUT.
OH!

SFX FALLS OVER
SFX SHINE
TERA-SAWA-KUN!
ARE YOU OKAY?!
Oh no, please, monopolize me all you wa...
ハタ
E.H
ARE YOU HURT?
NO WAY!! I was just turning to look over my shoulder
I'M FINE
Haha!
AT LEAST, THAT'S MY OWN PERSONAL DELUSION OF HOW IT IS.
SFX SUDDEN
ヒョッ
THANK GOODNESS
OH IT'S OKAY
I CAN GET UP ON MY OWN...
ガバ
© REELTIC

SFX: BA-THUMP
What the hell am I doing?
This isn't something to be so flustered about!!
YOU'VE GOT SOMETHING IN YOUR HAIR.
Not really
!!
Up until now I've been able to come in contact with women countless times, right?
I've got to get used to it while I can, before I miss my chance again.
...
HE'S KIND AND HARD-WORKING AND GENTLE...
BUT HE'S A GOOD PERSON
UGH. TERASAWA'S WITH A DIFFERENT GIRL AGAIN.
I'm totally gonna punch him in the face!!
THOSE GIRLS ARE STUPID TOO ACTING ALL FLASHY LIKE THAT
Kya
SFX: GRABS

far away
SAY, TAKEUCHI-SAN
YOU'RE PRETTY INEXPERIENCED, AREN'T YOU.
Let's see.
IT SEEMS LIKE YOU HAVEN'T REALLY DATED ANYONE BEFORE, AM I RIGHT?
CRAP. I messed up.
HEH HEH.
I didn't mean that in a bad way!!
I think I seriously insulted her!
SFX: DROPS
There there
UH NO NOT REALLY
SAKIKO YOU REALLY ARE A GOOD GIRL AREN'T YOU?
Yes,
I'll try again today.
SFX: CLENCH
I've got to show her the full extent of my popular self!
2 - B
WELL,
TODAY WE'LL START FROM HERE...

OH, IT'S ALREADY DARK OUT.
Of course...
After I said that, we didn't really talk at all
I'D BE GREAT IF YOU DID WELL ON TOMORROW'S TEST
HUH?
WHICH WAY IS IT TO YOUR HOUSE?
OH, IT'S LATE, SO I'LL WALK YOU HOME
?
Tha-that's right!! I'll... risk it all on this last chance.
Whenever I'm with this girl, I can't seem to be cool anymore.
It's so damn quiet.
I wonder why...
Or so I said.
What should I talk about...
SEX GULF
IT'S SNOWING.

HAHA
IT'S DIRTY!
I CAN EAT THE SNOW!
LOOK!!
THIS IS SO MUCH FUN.
I WONDER IF THIS IS WHAT IT FEELS LIKE TO BE WITH A BOYFRIEND...
WHERE THINGS TURN INTO A GREAT EVENT SIMPLY BECAUSE IT STARTED SNOWING. I'D REALLY LIKE THAT SOMEDAY.

TAKEUCHI-SAN,
DO YOU HAVE SOMEONE THAT YOU LIKE?
HM?
IT'S AN UNREQUITED LOVE THOUGH.
...OH...
YEAH.
!!

Well, then it's definitely not me.
O-OH !!
WHAT KINDA GUY IS HE?
UM LET'S SEE... HE'S KIND AND MATURE.
Whoa ...
BUT I WOULDN'T BE A GOOD MATCH FOR HIM SINCE I'M NOT AS GROWN-UP AS HE IS.
Of all the things he could be, he's the exact opposite of me.
Ah, well, what the hell
have I been doing up 'til now?
All of it
TAKEUCHI-SAN
For popularity's sake, I flirted with girls I didn't even like
and tried desperately to become her ideal man.

SEE YA.
Meant absolutely nothing.
Oh yeah

She didn't even consider me from the start.
Was it because I put all my effort into becoming who I thought would be an ideal man
Beep
that Takeuchi didn't even notice a single thing about me?
WHAT'S UP?
Maybe if I had thought about trying to get her to notice me, she would've actually noticed.
SHO—U
THIS IS RARE, ISN'T IT? YOU CALLING ME UP.

From the very start...
SHOCK!!
Sensei
FOR CALLING YOU OUT AT LAST MINUTE
I couldn't

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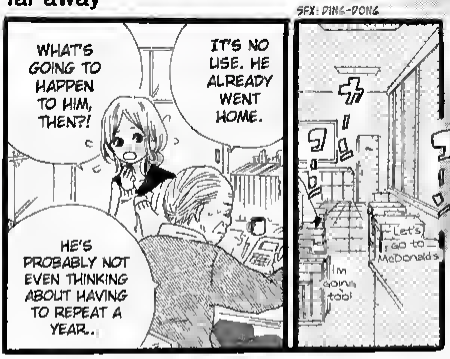
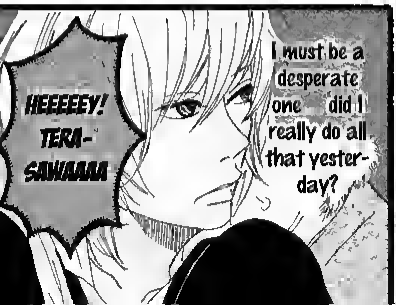

WHAT'S GOING TO HAPPEN TO HIM, THEN?!
IT'S NO USE. HE ALREADY WENT HOME.
HE'S PROBABLY NOT EVEN THINKING ABOUT HAVING TO REPEAT A YEAR..
SFX: PING-PONG
Let's go to McDonald's
I'm going too!

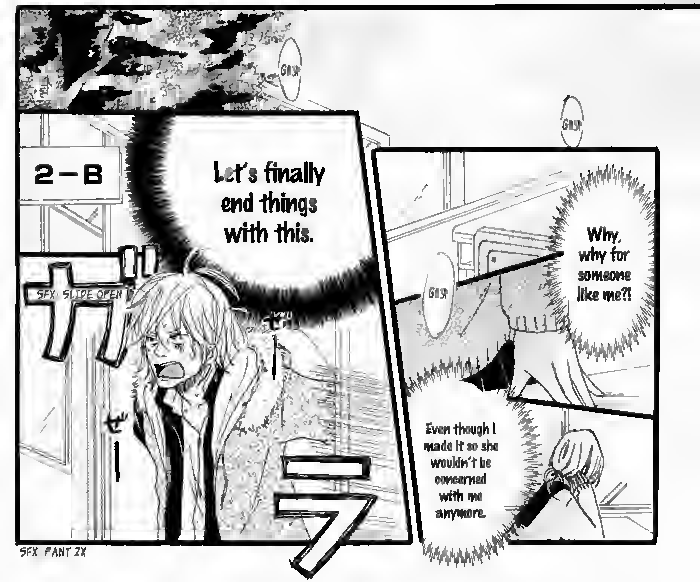
How's it going gorgeous ladies?
IT'S... IT'S MY FAULT.

WHY DON'T WE ALL HAVE SOME FUN?
HEY.
THIS ONE HERE'S A STUBBORN PRETTY BOY, YOU KNOW
SO FUNNY!
AHA-HAHA!


HEEEEEY! TERA-SAWAAAA
I must be a desperate one did I really do all that yesterday?

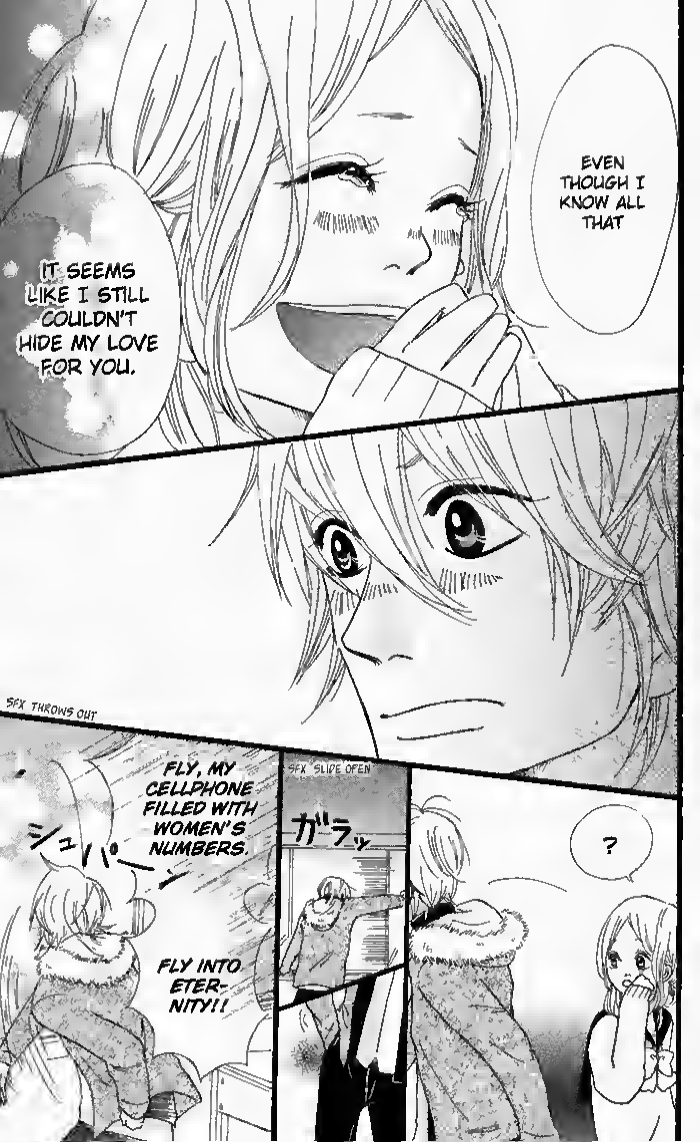
HE'S PROBABLY GIVEN UP...

BECAUSE TUTORING YOU WAS HER RESPONSIBILITY!!
SAKIKO SAID THAT IF YOU DON'T TAKE THAT TEST AND QUIT SCHOOL, SHE'S GONNA QUIT, TOO.
IF SAKIKO DROPS OUT OF SCHOOL IT'S YOUR DAMN FAULT!
BASTARD!! YOU'D BETTER STOP FUCKING UP GIRLS OUT HERE!!
Whoa, It's Takeuchi's friend...
WHAT THE HELL ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT?
HUH?


GRIP
2-B
Let's finally end things with this.
SFX: SLIDE OPEN
GRIP
GRIP
Why, why for someone like me?!
Even though I made it so she wouldn't be concerned with me anymore.
SFX: FANT 2X

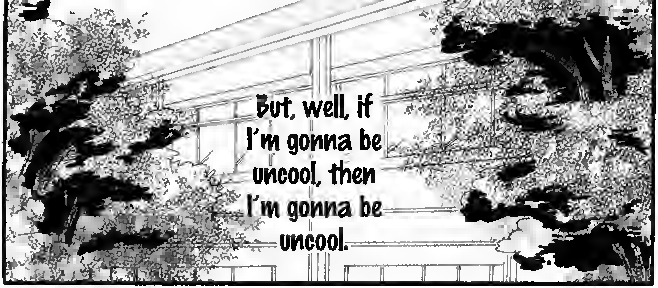
TERA-SAWA-KUN.
Ah.
I'M SORRY. I WENT AHEAD AND SAT DOWN WITHOUT YOU.
FORGET THAT, WHAT ABOUT THE TEST!
If we go now, we can still make it!!
SFX: GRABS
WHY THE HELL ARE YOU QUIT-TING, TAKEUCHI?
We're going to the staff room.
OH
I'M SORRY.
FORGET ABOUT WHAT HAPPENED YESTERDAY!!
WHAT ARE YOU TALK-ING ABOUT?

!!
YOU KNOW, HOW I INCONVENIENCED YOU WITH THE FACT THAT I LIKE YOU, TERASAWA-KUN.
What?
EVEN THOUGH I DIDN'T WANT ANYTHING TO CHANGE BETWEEN US, I FOUND THAT I COULDN'T GIVE IT UP...
SFX TEARS FALLING
I'M NOT AS ATTRACTIVE AS THOSE GIRLS THAT HANG AROUND YOU ALL THE TIME
AND YOU'VE NEVER LOOKED MY WAY, SO...
What, it was me?!
SEC... HANG ON!! WHAT THE HELL?! DON'T YOU HAVE SOMEONE YOU LIKE?
WAIT A
SOMEONE NICE AND MATURE, YOU SAID.


EVEN THOUGH I KNOW ALL THAT
IT SEEMS LIKE I STILL COULDN'T HIDE MY LOVE FOR YOU.
SFX THROWS OUT
FLY, MY CELLPHONE FILLED WITH WOMEN'S NUMBERS.
シュパーン
FLY INTO ETER-NITY!!
SFX SLIDE OPEN
ガラッ
?

EVEN AFTER ALL THIS, I STILL DON'T WANT TO JUST GIVE UP.
ME TOO!!
I always only show her the bad sides of me.
Oh... in the end

WOW.
But if she accepts me like this
Then the me who was only concerned with my outward appearance
SniFF
Your nose is running.
SFX: TA-DA
SFX: TICK TICK
SFX: BLOW
SFX: SIGH
I may not be smart and sensible like Takeuchi
HAS SOMETHING CHANGED IN YOUR MENTAL STATE?
YA THINK? HELL NO!! SHUT UP, WE'RE IN THE MIDDLE OF A TEST.
makes me think I should try being who I really am
SFX: SMIRK



SFX GYAAAAAA

SFX PEACE

《 The End 》

Special アリガトウ"

Special Thanks!! This is my dreamed-of first special volume. It makes me happy to know it will be in bookstores together with the works of my favorite authors!! I owe it all to everyone's support.

I <3 my readers, who read my manga and write me letters with their thoughts on my work. And to the people in charge whom I haven't stopped bugging since my debut, Yoshico-chan, K-suke, Yuca, Piyo, P-chan, Kuma... To all the friends who've given me their support, to everyone involved in this whole process, thank you so very much!!

I'd love to hear what you think ♥♥♥

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